



21st Century Learning Initiative

BYOD, Device Buying Guide And Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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21st Century Learning Initiative Device Buying Guide

This document provides the requirements for bringing your own device (BYOD) or purchasing a device for the 21st Century Learning Initiative in your school in the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD). This information may be updated from time to time. Please visit your school's web page for the most recent version of this information.

General Information

Students will require a laptop or tablet for the school year, and the device will need to interact with the Louis Riel School Division (LRSD) network environment. Windows 11 and Apple laptops are well suited for this initiative as well as iPads and Windows tablets (When used with a keyboard). Chromebooks and Android tablets do not have software that is best optimized for our learning environment. **For this reason, LRSD does not recommend purchasing a Chromebook or Android tablet for this BYOD initiative.**

Important Factors to Consider

Based on our experiences with previous year’s group of students, we offer the following general recommendations to consider.

- Cost: Purchasing a new laptop can start at prices of \$300 and go as high as over \$1000. An expensive laptop is not required for this initiative. A device in the \$300.00 to \$600.00 range will be suitable for your child.
- Portability of the device: You will want the device to comfortably fit in your school backpack without weighing them down. Laptops with screen sizes of 13 or 14 inches are preferred due to their size and weight. Tablets best suited have at least a 10-inch screen.
- Battery life: Choose a device with at least 6 hours of battery life, enough for the school day.
- Suitable CPU, memory, and storage capabilities.

	Minimum Specification	Preferred Specification
CPU	Intel N-series (e.g., N100), AMD Athlon Silver, or Apple M1	Intel Core i3 (12th Gen+), AMD Ryzen 3 (5000+), or Apple M2
Memory	8 Gb of RAM	16 Gb or higher
Storage	64-128 Gb Hard Drive	128 Gb or higher
Battery Life	6 hours minimum	8+ hours
OS	Windows 11, macOS Ventura or newer, iPadOS 16+	Windows 11, macOS Ventura or newer, iPadOS 16+

- Software: Buying additional software packages is not required. All Louis Riel School Division students are eligible for the Microsoft Student Advantage program. This program provides **Microsoft Office** to all students who attend Louis Riel School Division free of charge for up to 5 computers (Mac or PC). Students will be directed how to download and install the Office suite at the beginning of the school year.
- **Used devices** that meet the basic requirements will work providing they have batteries capable of at least 4 - 6 hours.

When to Purchase

Purchasing the device as close as possible to the start of the school year (July-August) is recommended because there are back-to-school specials available from computer vendors and big box stores such as Costco and BestBuy.

What to Purchase

Purchasing a new laptop or tablet can range in price from \$300.00 and up. As mentioned above, a device in the \$300.00 to \$600.00 range will be enough for this program. While LRSD doesn't recommend the purchasing of any specific type of device, below is a purchasing guide with examples of devices.

There are three main categories of devices to consider:

Laptops	Tablets	2-in-1 Devices
<div>Best overall choice for most students.</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Recommended: Windows laptops or MacBooksWhy: Reliable, full keyboard, compatible with all school softwareAvoid: Chromebooks (not compatible with LRSD systems)Cost Range:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Entry Level: \$300+Mid-Level: \$600+High-End: \$900+	<div>Good for portability but must include a keyboard.</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Recommended: iPads or Microsoft Surface tabletsWhy: Lightweight, touch interface, Office 365 compatibleAvoid: Android tablets (limited software compatibility)Important: A physical keyboard is strongly recommended	<div>A hybrid of laptop and tablet with a touchscreen.</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Recommended: Windows 2-in-1 laptops (e.g., Lenovo Yoga, HP x360)Why: Versatile, including keyboard, supports stylus inputCost Range:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Entry Level: \$400+Mid-Level: \$700+High-End: \$1000+

All Windows based laptops and tablets must be running **Windows 11**. Only laptops running Windows 11 will be able to use our online systems in school.

All Mac laptops should have the newest operating system installed to ensure that the device is compatible with all our online systems. This is also true for all iOS devices.

Purchasing Used Devices

Used laptops/tablets are a great option for families to consider. Please consider the following:

- Used devices that meet the basic requirements will work providing they have batteries capable of at least 4-6 hours.
- Used devices must run Windows 11 to be able to access LRSD Wi-Fi and utilize other resources.

Purchasing Software

No additional software will be required beyond the device's operating system and an internet browser which all systems ship with. As stated before, all LRSD students are eligible to download Microsoft Office for up to 5 personal devices that they have for their school laptop or at home.

Virus Protection

If you purchase a Windows device, you do not need to buy an Anti-Virus program. There is an antivirus program already built into the operating system. It is also recommended that if your laptop comes with a free "trial-based" antivirus program such as MacAfee, or Norton Antivirus to not renew it once the trial period is over. You can uninstall it and use Microsoft's built-in antivirus software.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: What happens if a family cannot afford a device? Will my son/daughter have to go without one?

A: LRSD will provide a device for families that cannot afford to purchase one. This loaner device can be for a few weeks or for the entire year, depending on the circumstances. Please speak to your school administrator if you need to arrange to have a device loaned to you.

Q: Will the students have open access to the internet?

A: No, Louis Riel School Division filters its internet feed blocking around 25 categories of information on the Internet. Students that are connected to the school's wireless system use the exact same filters that we have in place for all school owned devices.

Q: What if our device gets stolen?

A: Theft of personal items can be a concern in a building housing a great many people like a high school. Students need to take responsibility for safeguarding their personal property by not leaving any valuables unattended. The School Division is not responsible for lost or stolen personal items but has put in place several measures to help secure student belongings.

- Louis Riel School Division will also register student devices purchased for the 21st Century Learning Initiative in the “STOP Security Plate” program <http://www.computersecurity.com/stop/> based on parental requests. The Stop Security Plate Program helps to deter the theft of devices and helps to identify lost or stolen devices. Parents must notify the school that they wish to be registered.

Q: Will the students do all their work on their devices?

A: We do not expect, nor do we encourage the use of student devices 100% of the day as this is impractical from a technological perspective in terms of battery life and not applicable as many classroom activities do not lend themselves to technology infusion.

Q: Do I need to buy a special laptop case?

A: We do not encourage the use of Laptop cases for the program. Students typically have a backpack for carrying school supplies which they can also use to carry their device. Please ensure the backpack has sufficient space to hold all the items a student will need to carry and if possible, has some padding or protection for the device. Laptop cases, although designed to carry and protect laptops, also inadvertently ‘advertise’ their contents and are more prone to be stolen if left unattended.

Q: Can students print from their personal devices at school?

A: Printing from personal devices is not supported on the school network. Students should use school computers or submit work digitally through Office 365 tools like OneDrive or Teams.

Q: What happens if a student forgets their device at home?

A: Students are expected to bring their device daily, just like any other school supply. However, schools have a limited number of loaner devices available for short-term use.

Q: Will students be able to charge their device at school?

A: Students should arrive with a fully charged device each day. Charging stations may be limited, so long battery life is important.

Q: Can students install their own apps or games on the device?

A: While students may install personal apps, the device must remain suitable for school use. Inappropriate content or apps that interfere with learning may result in loss of access to the divisional network and other LRSD online resources.

Q: Is technical support available for student-owned devices?

A: The school division does not provide technical support for personal devices. Families are responsible for maintenance and repairs.